

Core brief

**Message from Jane Grant, Chief Executive
(15 July 2022, 3.45pm)**

According to the latest figures from the Office of National Statistics published today, 6.3% of the Scottish population is estimated to have a Covid infection, up from 5.9% last week. Whilst this remains higher than the overall UK position, the encouraging news is that the rate of increase is slowing down. A similar trend is being seen in asymptomatic testing that continues in care homes and together these might provide an indication that we may be reaching the peak of the current wave.

In the meantime, as colleagues will be aware, hospital admissions remain high, with 541 patients in hospital today with a positive Covid diagnosis within the past 28 days. Staff absences also remain significant with 862 staff off yesterday with COVID. In addition to the steps being taken to manage unplanned absences that I highlighted in my message last week, our Recruitment Teams are also working hard to bring on new staff. Since the beginning of June almost 300 new staff have joined NHSGGC, including nursing, AHP, medical and support staff. A further 300 staff will be joining in the new few weeks. As part of our recruitment efforts, I am pleased to welcome all 50 members of staff recruited from our successful international drive who have either already started or are starting imminently.

This week, I was delighted to join staff from Leverndale Hospital to welcome the Minister for Mental Wellbeing and Social Care, Kevin Stewart, when he came to hear more about the success of the hospital's Mental Health Assessment Unit (MHAU). The Leverndale Unit was one of two MHAUs established as a new unscheduled care service in Greater Glasgow and Clyde in March 2020 in response to the pandemic. They were set up to provide an appropriate location to assess and support patients who are experiencing a mental health crisis or distress and who require a specialist mental health assessment and to reduce presentations at our Emergency Departments. The pioneering approach has been so successful that it has since expanded to include young people and by June 2021 was receiving 1400 referrals per month. Congratulations go to all staff involved in setting up and developing this excellent person-centred service.

Our teams continue to have their work recognised through national awards. Greenock's stunning new health and care centre, which opened last year, has picked up the best new health building at the Scottish Design Awards 2022. The £21 million facility is an exemplar of sustainability and has surpassed its emissions targets by 15%. It has been a huge success with patients and staff alike, with incredible public spaces, local art and culture represented throughout and a terraced garden and even a rooftop terrace for staff, with views across the River Clyde. Congratulations to our capital planning and other NHSGGC colleagues and partners across Inverclyde HSCP for their work to create a much-valued facility for the local community.

Meanwhile, senior nurse Craig Davidson, who works within the Asylum Health Bridging Team at Glasgow City HSCP, has been shortlisted for the Rising Star honour at this year's Nursing Times Awards. Craig works to support the health of asylum seekers and, most recently, Ukrainian refugees who have been welcomed to the city. I'm sure you will all join me in wishing Craig well at the awards later this year.

This week, I want to share some feedback for Ward 5D, QEUH, that demonstrates how our teams, in spite of the current challenges, continue to work hard to ensure our patients are well cared for. “My elderly mum was admitted to ward 5D in QEUH and the care she received was excellent. All staff were very kind and attentive and she cannot praise them highly enough. As a family this was very reassuring to know that she was being well looked after. Our hospitals are under extreme pressure with staff working extremely hard and under pressure but as a healthcare professional it makes me very proud to see that all staff strive to deliver excellent care. I was communicated with by the staff to keep me up to date on her day of discharge and this went very smoothly with all support services in place for her getting home.” Well done, Ward 5D for some well-deserved feedback.

Finally, we may joke about the weather in Scotland, but heat is a real risk that can affect anyone. Whilst Scotland is not predicted to experience the extreme heat that is forecast for parts of England next week, it is still important that we all heed public health advice and take care to protect ourselves and keep an eye on vulnerable family, friends and neighbours. So, as we head into the weekend and a week of warmer weather, please take care and look after your loved ones.

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